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ABSTRACT

Prior to and during the Civil War, the North and the South differed greatly in the resources they could use. Documents held by the National Archives can aid in understanding the factors that influenced the eventual outcome of the War Between the States. After Abraham Lincoln was elected President in 1860, the South seceded because they believed that Lincoln would restrict their rights to own slaves. They decided that secession was a better choice than to give up their economic system and their way of life. This lesson uses documents which illustrate the President's role as commander-in-chief of the military as specified in Article II, Section 2, of the U.S. Constitution. The lesson correlates to the National History Standards and to the National Standards for Civics and Government. It furnishes seven primary sources including letters, messages, telegrams, a photograph, and a sound recording of the last surviving Confederate veteran. The lesson provides historical background about the War Between the States, outlining the advantages and disadvantages of both the North and the South. It offers seven diverse teaching activities for implementation, such as brainstorming, a research and presentation activity, creative writing assignments, science and technology research, and an oral history assignment. Contains a written document analysis worksheet and a sound recording analysis worksheet. (BT)

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National Archives and Records Administration

THE CONSTITUTION COMMUNITY

Civil War and Reconstruction (1850-1870)

Letters, Telegrams, and Photographs Illustrating Factors that Affected the Civil War

By David Traill

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http://www.nara.gov/education/classrm.html

2001

The Constitution Community is a partnership between classroom teachers and education specialists from the National Archives and Records Administration. We are developing lessons and activities that address constitutional issues, correlate to national academic standards, and encourage the analysis of primary source documents. The lessons that have been developed are arranged according to historical era.

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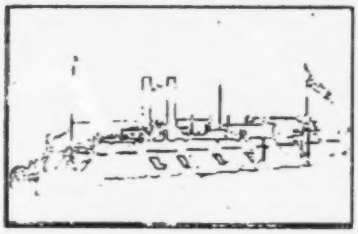


Letters, Telegrams, and Photographs Illustrating Factors that Affected the Civil War

Constitutional Connection

The documents in this lesson illustrate the president's role as commander-in-chief of the military as specified in Article II, Section 2 , of the U.S. Constitution.

This lesson correlates to the National History Standards.

Era 5 -Civil War and Reconstruction (1850-1877)

- **Standard 2A** -Demonstrate understanding of how the resources of the Union and Confederacy affected the course of the war.

This lesson correlates to the National Standards for Civics and Government.

Standard II.D.4 -Evaluate, take, and defend positions on issues in which fundamental values and principles may be in conflict.

Standard III.A.1 -Explain how the U. S. Constitution grants and distributes power to national and state government and how it seeks to prevent the abuse of power.

Cross-curricular Connections

Share this exercise with your history, government, and American literature colleagues.

List of Documents

1. Letter from Robert E. Lee to Simon Cameron, Secretary of War, in which Lee resigned from the U.S. Army.

2. Message of President Abraham Lincoln nominating Ulysses S. Grant to be Lieutenant General of the Army.

3. Telegram from General William T. Sherman to President Abraham Lincoln announcing the surrender of Savannah, Georgia, as a Christmas present to the president.

4. Telegram from Abraham Lincoln to Lieutenant General Ulysses Grant at City Point, Virginia.

5. Emancipation Proclamation, page 1 , page 2 , page 3 , page 4 , page 5.

6. Photograph of the first ironclad gunboat built in America, the *Saint Louis* , ca.1862.

7. Sound recording of an interview with John Salling, last surviving Confederate veteran. Sound recording is found at <http://www.nara.gov/education/cc/civilwar.html>:

Audio: On meeting famous generals. Explains he was a saltpeter digger. (159K, 0:20)
Audio: Discusses war career. Includes a long pause while he tries to remember the name of a commanding officer. (413K, 0:53)
Audio: On singing. Relates how he sang for General Bush. (336K, 0:43)
Audio: Sings the song that he sang for General Bush. (304K, 0:39)
Audio: Sings "Hang Jeff Davis from the Sour Apple Tree." (239K, 0:31)
Audio: Explains he was drafted, not enlisted. (214K, 0:27)
Audio: Sings a verse of "Yellow Rose of Texas." Interviewer recites another version. (438K, 0:56)
Audio: On seeing Teddy Roosevelt speak at Gettysburg. (398K, 0:51)
Audio: Describes meeting soldiers at Gettysburg reunion. (Part 1). (399K, 0:51)
Audio: Describes meeting soldiers at Gettysburg reunion. (Part 2). Recalls how Union soldier talked with Confederate soldier. (444K, 0:57)
Audio: Describes meeting soldiers at Gettysburg reunion. (Part 3). Recalls how Union soldier talked with Confederate soldier. (610K, 1:18)

Historical Background

Prior to and during the Civil War, the North and South differed greatly in the resources that they could use. Documents held by the National Archives can aid in the understanding of the factors that influenced the eventual outcome of the War Between the States.

After the election of Abraham Lincoln to the presidency in 1860, the states of the southern United States broke away from the federal union that had existed since the

ratification of the Constitution. Believing that Lincoln would restrict their rights to own slaves, Southerners decided that secession was a better choice than to give up their economic system and their way of life. President Lincoln and the North opposed the South's withdrawal; the president steadfastly maintained throughout the war that the secession was illegal and that the newly formed Confederate States of America was not valid as a new nation to the world. Despite Lincoln's hopes that the secession would end without conflict, the two regions fought a war that exploited the advantages and opportunities that each held over the other before their differences could be resolved.

The North held many advantages over the South during the Civil War. Its population was several times that of the South, a potential source for military enlistees and civilian manpower. The South lacked the substantial number of factories and industries of the North that produced needed war materials. The North had a better transportation network, mainly highways, canals, and railroads, which could be easily used to resupply military forces in the field. At sea, the Union navy was more capable and dominant, while the army was better trained and better supplied. The rest of the world also recognized the United States as a legitimate government, allowing U.S. diplomats to obtain loans and other trade concessions.

The South had fewer advantages, but it held several that would pose great threats to attempts by their Northern neighbors to end the rebellion. The South was able to fight on its home terrain, and it could win the war simply by continuing to exist after the hostilities ended later. The South also had a military tradition that encouraged young men to serve in the armed forces or attend a military school; many had served the U.S. military prior to the Civil War, only to resign and fight for their states and family. In addition, the South had the leadership of great commanders, including Robert E. Lee, Joseph Johnston, and "Stonewall" Jackson.

As disadvantages, the South had to worry about its slave population, which posed the threat of rebellion and assistance to the Northern cause. Actions by the North to promote this fear included the Emancipation Proclamation, which ended slavery in all territories held by Union troops, but not in all areas of the North, such as loyal, but slave-owning, states along the borders of the two powers. Had the North tried to free slaves in these areas, more aid would have been generated for the South, and slave-owning Maryland's secession would leave the U.S. capital in Confederate hands. In addition, the North suffered because a series of senior generals did not successfully exploit the weaknesses of the South, nor did they act upon the suggestions of their commander-in-chief. President Lincoln finally got his desired general in Ulysses S. Grant, who had solidified the Union's control of the West in parts of the Mississippi River Basin. Grant directed the defeat of Southern forces and strongholds and held off determined advances northward by the Confederates on several occasions before the surrender by Lee to Grant took place in 1865.

To defeat the South, the North had to achieve several goals. First, control of the Mississippi River had to be secured to allow unimpeded movement of needed Western goods. Second, the South had to be cut off from international traders and smugglers that

could aid the Southern war effort. Third, the Confederate army had to be incapacitated to prevent further northward attacks such as that at Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, and to ease the battle losses of the North. Fourth, the South's ability to produce needed goods and war materials had to be curtailed. It was these measures that the South had to counter with their own plans to capitalize on early victories that weakened the Northern resolve to fight, to attain international recognition as a sovereign state, and to keep Union forces from seizing Confederate territory.

The South ultimately did not achieve its goals, and after four years of fighting the North won the war. The devisive, destructive conflict cast a shadow on the successes of the United States during the 19th century, however. The country had to find ways to heal the wounds of war during Reconstruction.

Resources

Davis, Burke. *Sherman's March* . New York: Vintage Books, 1991.

Garrison, Webb. *Civil War Curiosities* . Nashville: Rutledge Hill Press, 1994.

Wiley, Bell Irvin. *The Life of Billy Yank* . Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1991.

Wiley, Bell Irvin. *The Life of Johnny Reb* . Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1993.

Teaching Activities

Brainstorming Activity

1. Direct students to list the factors that would be important in winning a battle or a war. These might include leadership, resources, strategy, and social conditions. Assign students to rank their factors from most to least important. Discuss with students the factors they identified, why they chose certain factors, and what reasons prompted them to assign their ranks.

Document Analysis

2. Divide students into six groups, and provide a copy of one of the first six documents to each group. Direct student groups to analyze their documents using the Written Document Analysis Worksheet . Ask each group to decide how the factors listed in Activity 1 are reflected in the document they analyzed. Ask a volunteer from each group to describe their document to the class and explain which factor it illustrates.

Research and Presentation Activity

3. Refer students back to the list of factors they created in Activity 1 and discussed in Activity 2. Direct each student to select one factor and do additional research on the effects of that factor on the course of the Civil War. For example, if the student selected leadership, their research would focus on the leaders of the Civil War. Direct students to report their findings to the class in a five minute oral presentation.

Creative Writing Assignments

4. Divide students into four groups. Distribute copies of Documents 1-4, giving one document to each of the four groups. Using textbooks, assign each group to research and brainstorm the motivations the author of the document may have had in writing it and what the response of the recipient might have been. Direct each group to write a response to their document as though they were the person who received it.

5. Assign students one of the following roles and ask them to write a two-page essay explaining the factors they think most affected such a person's Civil War experience. Invite student volunteers to read their essays aloud and ask the class to determine the point of view of the author.

Slave owner
Southern farmer without slaves
Northern farmer
Northern wife
Abolitionist
Northern black freeman
Northern Senator
Southern Senator
House slave
Field hand
Foreign visitor

Science and Technology Research

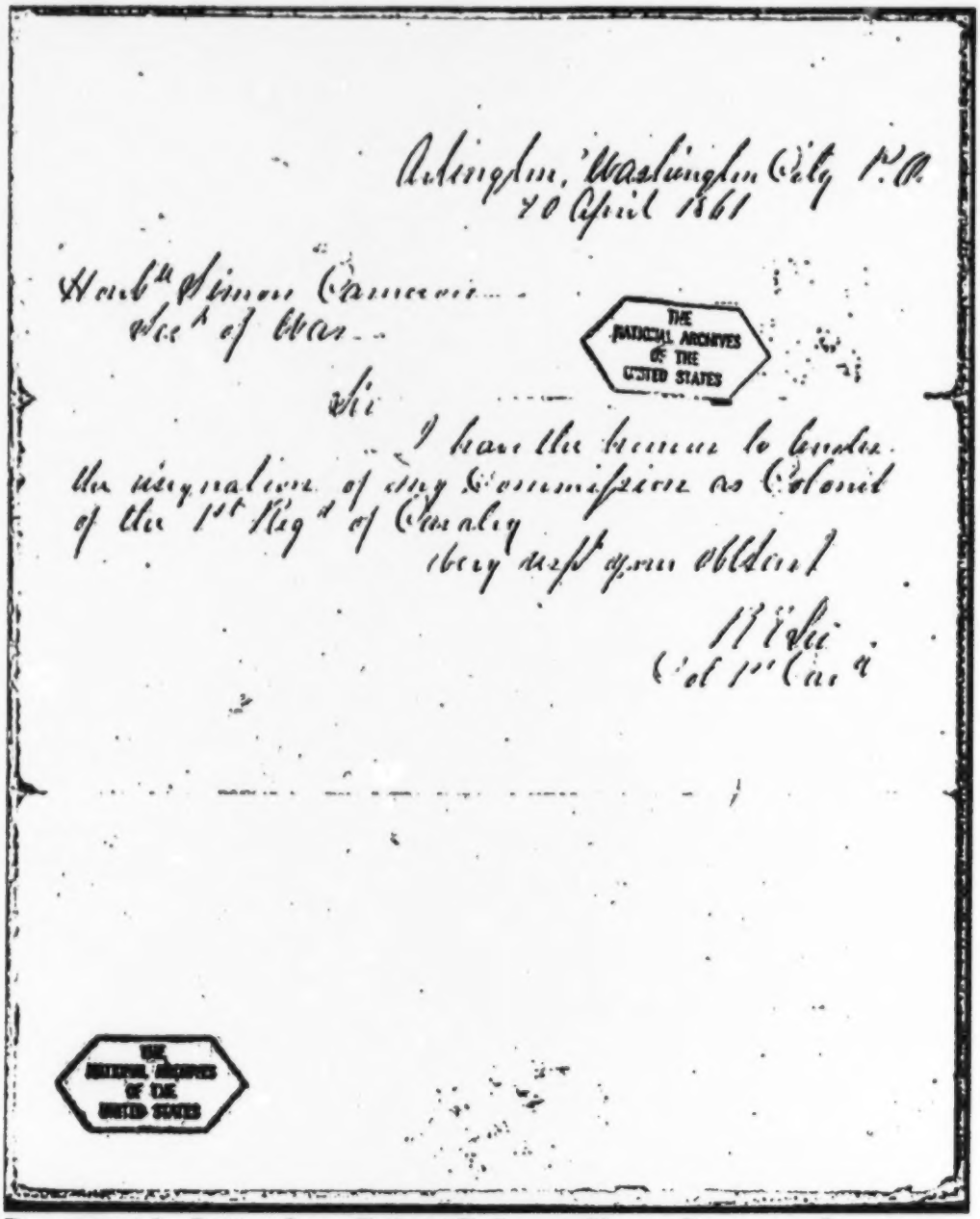
6. Distribute copies of Document 6 to students. Explain that this is one of more than 6,000 Civil War photographs available online from the National Archives and that it illustrates one of the technological advances of the Civil War period. Direct students to conduct a search for other Civil War photographs in the NAIL database http://www.nara.gov/nara/nail.html that specifically depict technological advances. Direct each student to print out one photograph and conduct additional research using library and Internet resources about the weapon, medical practice, form of transportation, or form of communication. Instruct students to post their photographs on the classroom wall and briefly describe the information they gathered. Discuss with students the correlation between technology and the outcome of the Civil War.

Oral History Assignment

7. Distribute a copy of the Sound Recording Analysis Worksheet to each student. Play the oral interview with John Salling and direct students to complete the worksheet. Ask students to note examples of how his life was affected by the beginning, middle, and end of the war. Assign students to write one paragraph about what factors may have contributed to his experiences for each period of the war.

The documents included in this project are from Record Group 94, Records of the Office of the Adjutant General; Record Group 46, Records of the U.S. Senate; Record Group 107, Records of the Office of the Military Telegraph; Record Group 11, General Records of the U.S. Government; Record Group 165, Records of the War Department Library; and Record Group 200, National Archives Gift Collection. They are available online through the National Archives Information Locator (NAIL) database <http://www.nara.gov/nara/nail.html>, control numbers
NWCTB-94-PI17E12-L60(1861)
NWL-46-MCCOOK-2(11)
NWCTB-107-CORR-AIE36-TELEGRAM)
NWCTB-107-NARSA1E34-VOL1A2
NWCTB-11-PRDOC-PI159E23-PROC95
NWDNS-165-C-630
NWDNM(s)-200-HOWARD-1.
NAIL is a searchable database that contains information about a wide variety of NARA holdings across the country. You can use NAIL to search record descriptions by keywords or topics and retrieve digital copies of selected textual documents, photographs, maps, and sound recordings related to thousands of topics.

This article was written by David Traill, a teacher at South Fork High School in Stuart, FL.



Arlington, Washington City P.O.
20 April 1861

Hon.ble Simon Cameron
Sec.y of War

THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF THE UNITED STATES

Sir

I have the honour to tender the resignation of my Commission as Colonel of the 1st Reg.t of Cavalry

very respt. your obdt. servt

R E Lee
Col 1st Cav.y

THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF THE UNITED STATES

Document 1: Letter from Robert E. Lee to Simon Cameron, Secretary of War, in which Lee resigned from the U.S. Army.

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Written Document Analysis Worksheet

1. TYPE OF DOCUMENT (Check one):

___ Newspaper	___ Map	___ Advertisement
___ Letter	___ Telegram	___ Congressional record
___ Patent	___ Press release	___ Census report
___ Memorandum	___ Report	___ Other

2. UNIQUE PHYSICAL QUALITIES OF THE DOCUMENT (Check one or more):

___ Interesting letterhead	___ Notations
___ Handwritten	___ "RECEIVED" stamp
___ Typed	___ Other
___ Seals	

3. DATE(S) OF DOCUMENT: _____

4. AUTHOR (OR CREATOR) OF THE DOCUMENT: _____

POSITION (TITLE): _____

5. FOR WHAT AUDIENCE WAS THE DOCUMENT WRITTEN? _____

_____

6. DOCUMENT INFORMATION (There are many possible ways to answer A-E.)

A. List three things the author said that you think are important:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

B. Why do you think this document was written?

_____

_____

C. What evidence in the document helps you know why it was written? Quote from the document.

_____

_____

D. List two things the document tells you about life in the United States at the time it was written:

_____

_____

E. Write a question to the author that is left unanswered by the document:

_____

_____

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Sound Recording Analysis Worksheet

Step 1. Pre-listening

A. Whose voices will you hear on this recording?

B. What is the date of this recording?

C. Where was this recording made?

Step 2. Listening

A. Type of sound recording (check one):

____ Policy speech
____ Congressional testimony
____ News report
____ Interview
____ Entertainment broadcast
____ Press conference
____ Convention proceedings
____ Campaign speech
____ Arguments before a court
____ Panel discussion
____ Other

B. Unique physical qualitities of the recording

____ Music
____ Live broadcast
____ Narrated
____ Special sound effects
____ Background sound

C. What is the tone or mood of this recording?

_____

_____

Step 3. Post-listening (or repeated listening)

A. List three things in this sound recording that you think are important:

1.

2.

3.

B. Why do you think the original broadcast was made and for what audience?

_____

_____

C. What evidence in the recording helps you to know why it was made?

_____

_____

D. List two things this sound recording tells you about life in the United States at the time it was made:

1.

2.

E. Write a question to the broadcaster that is left unanswered by this sound recording.

_____

_____

F. What information do you gain about this event that would not be conveyed by a written transcript? Be specific.

_____

_____

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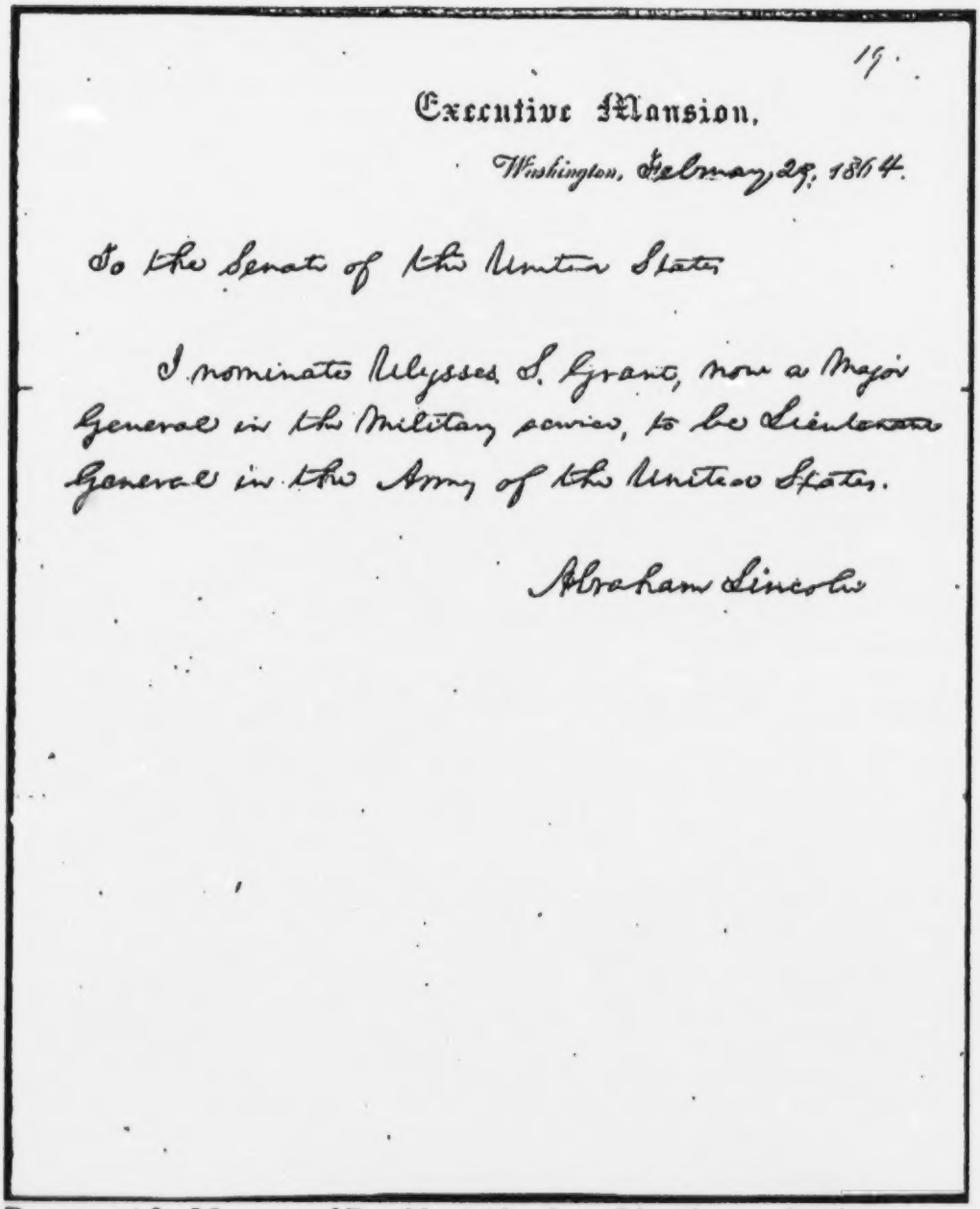

19.

Executive Mansion,

Washington, Feb'ry 29, 1864.

To the Senate of the United States

I nominate Ulysses S. Grant, now a Major General in the Military service, to be Lieutenant General in the Army of the United States.

Abraham Lincoln

Document 2: Message of President Abraham Lincoln nominating Ulysses S. Grant to be Lieutenant General of the Army.

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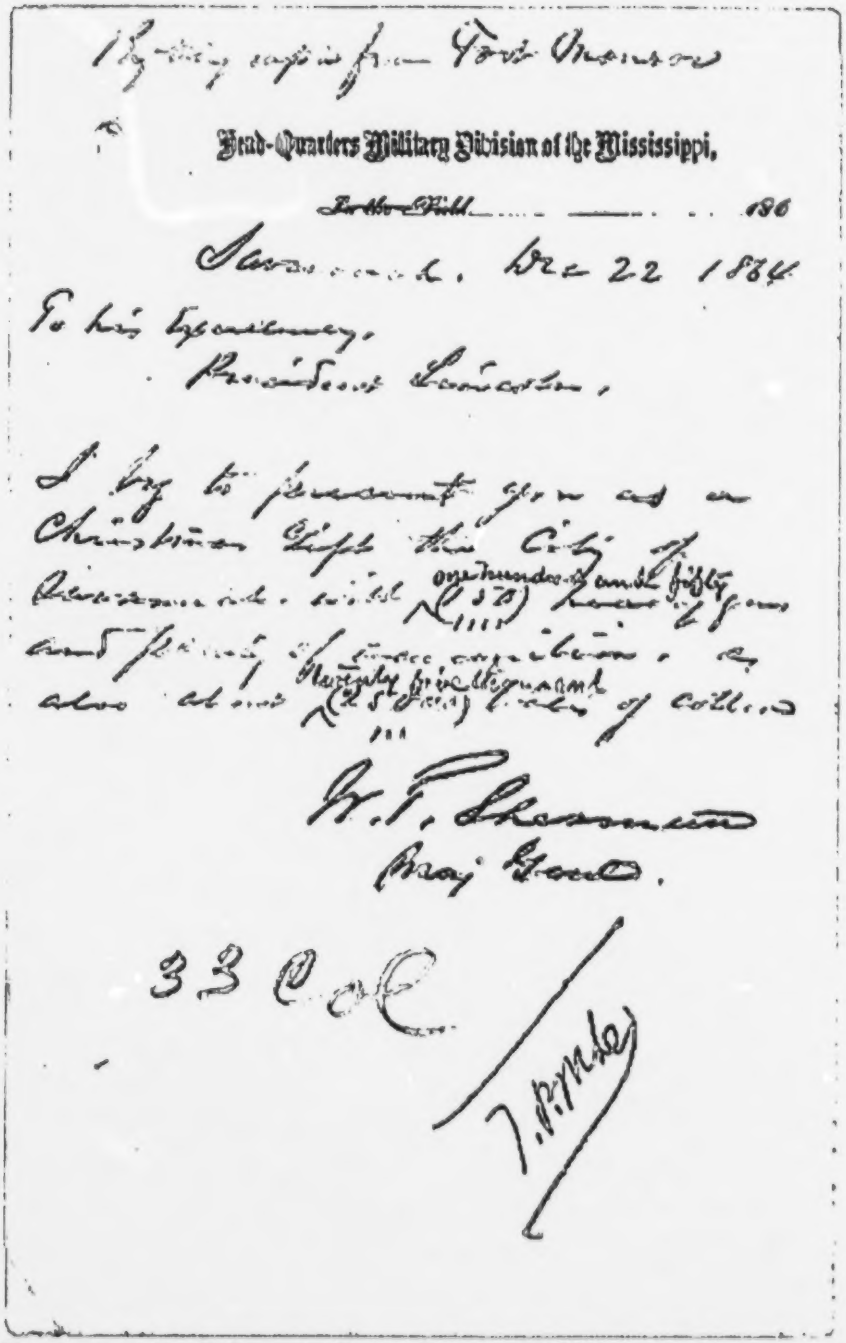

By this copied from Genl Sherman

Head-Quarters Military Division of the Mississippi,

In the Field 186

Savannah, Dec 22 1864

To his Excellency,
President Lincoln,

I beg to present you as a Christmas Gift the City of Savannah, with (150) one hundred and fifty guns and plenty of Ammunition, & also about (25 Thousand) twenty five thousand bales of Cotton

W. T. Sherman
Maj Genl.

330 C

T. B. Pryde

Document 3: Telegram from General William T. Sherman to President Abraham Lincoln announcing the surrender of Savannah, Georgia, as a Christmas present to the president.

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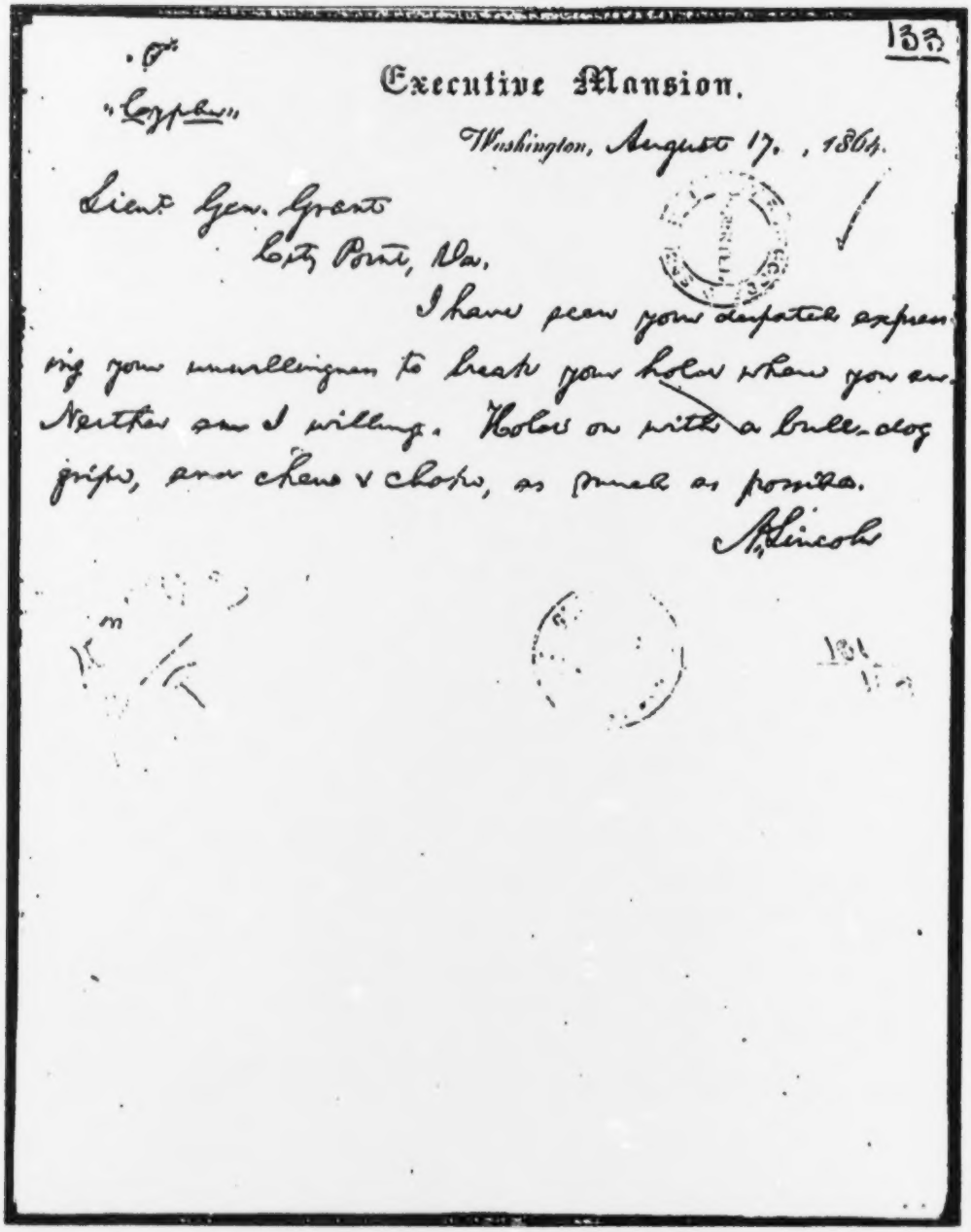

Executive Mansion.

"Copy"

Washington, August 17, 1864.

Lieut. Gen. Grant
City Point, Va.

I have seen your dispatch expressing your unwillingness to break your hold where you are. Neither am I willing. Hold on with a bull-dog grip, and chew & choke, as much as possible.

A. Lincoln

Document 4: Telegram from Abraham Lincoln to Lieutenant General Ulysses Grant at City Point, Virginia.

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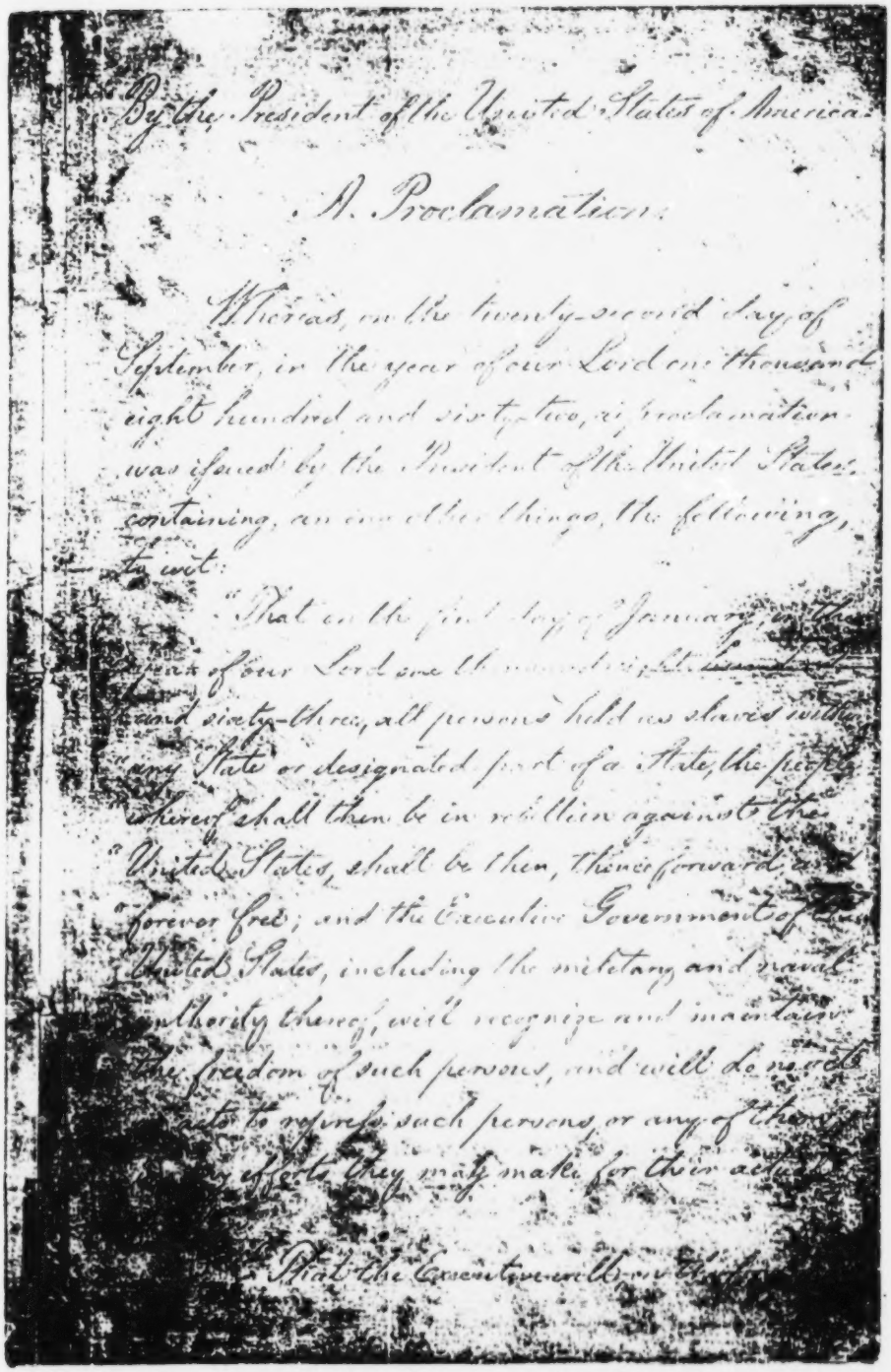

By the President of the United States of America:

A Proclamation.

Whereas, on the twenty-second day of September, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and sixty-two, a proclamation was issued by the President of the United States, containing, among other things, the following, to wit:

"That on the first day of January, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and sixty-three, all persons held as slaves within any State or designated part of a State, the people whereof shall then be in rebellion against the United States, shall be then, thenceforward, and forever free; and the Executive Government of the United States, including the military and naval authority thereof, will recognize and maintain the freedom of such persons, and will do no act or acts to repress such persons, or any of them, in any efforts they may make for their actual

"That the Executive will on the

Document 5: Emancipation Proclamation, Page 1

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"of January aforesaid, by proclamation, designate
"the States and parts of States, if any, in which the
"people thereof, respectively, shall then be in rebellion
"against the United States; and the fact that any
"State, or the people thereof, shall on that day be, in
"good faith, represented in the Congress of the United
"States by members chosen thereto at elections
"wherein a majority of the qualified voters of such
"State shall have participated, shall, in the absence
"of strong countervailing testimony, be deemed con-
"clusive evidence that such State, and the people
"thereof, are not then in rebellion against the
"United States."

Now, therefore I, Abraham Lincoln, President of the United States, by virtue of the power in me vested as Commander-in-Chief, of the Army and Navy of the United States in time of actual armed rebellion against the authority and government of the United States, and as a fit and necessary war measure for suppressing said rebellion, do, on this first day of January, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and sixty-three, and in accordance with my purpose so to do publicly proclaimed for the full period of one hundred days, from the

Document 5: Emancipation Proclamation, Page 2

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day first above mentioned, order and designate as the States and parts of States wherein the people thereof respectively, are this day in rebellion against the United States, the following, to wit:

Arkansas, Texas, Louisiana, (except the Parishes of St. Bernard, Plaquemines, Jefferson, St. John, St. Charles, St. James Ascension, Assumption, Terrebonne, Lafourche, St. Mary, St. Martin, and Orleans, including the City of New Orleans) Mississippi, Alabama, Florida, Georgia, South Carolina, North Carolina, and Virginia, (except the forty-eight counties designated as West Virginia, and also the counties of Berkley, Accomac, Northampton, Elizabeth City, York, Princess Anne, and Norfolk, including the cities of Norfolk and Portsmouth), and which excepted parts are, for the present, left precisely as if this proclamation were not issued.

And by virtue of the power, and for the purpose aforesaid, I do order and declare that all persons held as slaves within said designated States, and parts of States, are, and hereforward shall be free; and that the Exec-

Document 5: Emancipation Proclamation, Page 3

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government of the United States, including the military and naval authorities thereof, will recognize and maintain the freedom of said persons.

And I hereby enjoin upon the people so declared to be free to abstain from all violence, unless in necessary self-defence; and I recommend to them that, in all cases when allowed, they labor faithfully for reasonable wages.

And I further declare and make known, that such persons of suitable condition, will be received into the armed service of the United States to garrison forts, positions, stations, and other places, and to man vessels of all sorts in said service.

And upon this act, sincerely believed to be an act of justice, warranted by the Constitution, upon military necessity, I invoke the considerate judgment of mankind, and the gracious favor of Almighty God.

In witness whereof, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the seal of the United States to be affixed.

Done at the city of Washington, this first day of January, in the year of our Lord

Document 5: Emancipation Proclamation, Page 4

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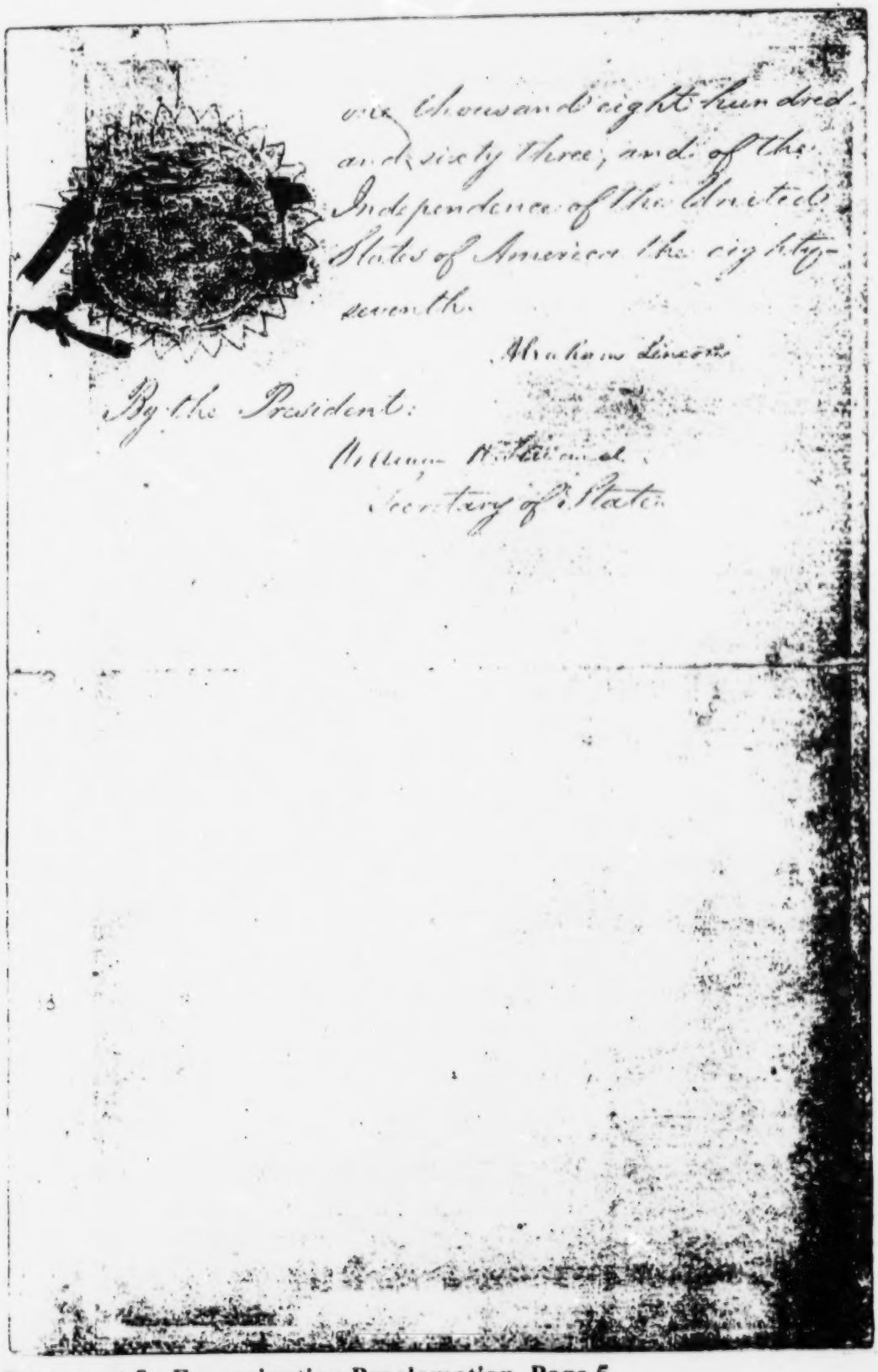

one thousand eight hundred and sixty three, and of the Independence of the United States of America the eighty-seventh.

Abraham Lincoln

By the President:

William H. Seward,
Secretary of State.

Document 5: Emancipation Proclamation, Page 5

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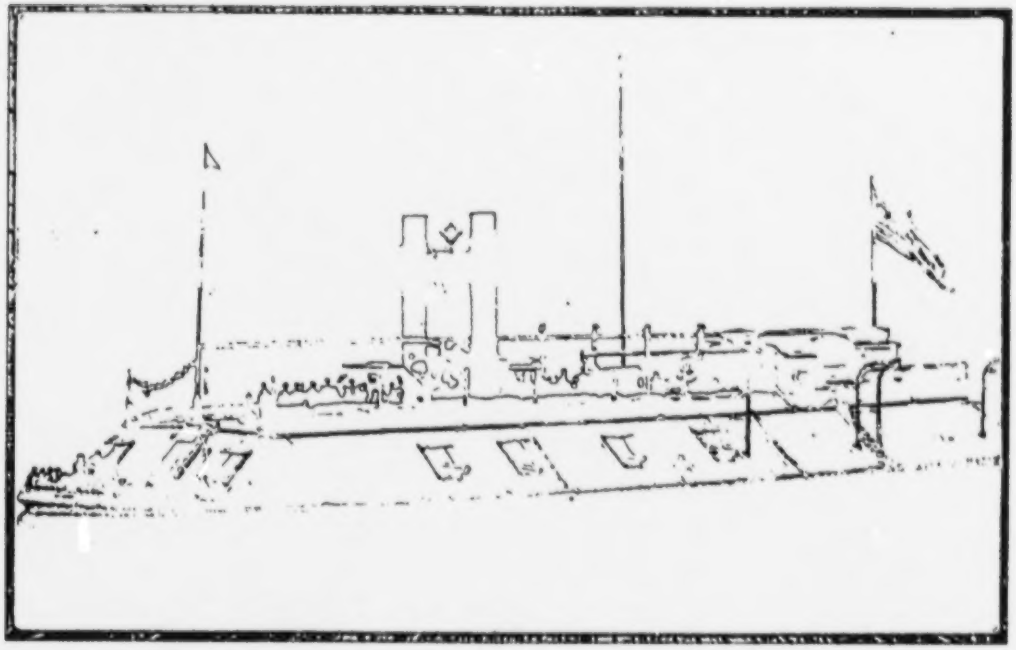

Document 6: Photograph of the first ironclad gunboat built in America, the *Saint Louis* , ca. 1862

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